

VZCZCXRO0922
RR RUEHBZ
DE RUCNDT #0914 2881424
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 151424Z OCT 09
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7352
INFO RUEHBZ/AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 000914

SIPDIS

IO/UNP FOR S. EDMONDSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OFDP](#) [PREL](#) [CF](#)

SUBJECT: RESOLVED DEBT: PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE)

¶1. USUN received a request from the New York City Commission for the UN to assist company Connections Unlimited in recovering \$82,299.78 for services it provided the Republic of the Congo (GOC) for an ecotourism event on September 1, ¶2006. NYCC's legal counsel has worked since October 2007 to facilitate payment of the commercial debt, which the GOC has since acknowledged it owes. The contract for "The Congo Forest: Heritage of Humanity" was signed by Congolese Minister of Forestry Economy, Henri Djombo, and \$230,567.97 of the total bill of \$285,618.00 was paid by October 2006. The remaining balance, as of July 2009, includes 1.5% interest, per the contract.

¶2. USUN/HC Minister Counselor Graham met with Ambassador Bale on September 15, 2009, in advance of the arrival of his high-level delegation to the 64th UNGA. USUN/HC MINCOUNS advised AMB Bale that the US Mission takes such outstanding debt seriously since it raises the issue of a mission's ability to support its activities in NY. He warned that the host country might have to consider whether actions such as reducing the staffing level at the Republic of Congo Mission to the UN are appropriate to assist the mission in fulfilling its financial obligations.

¶3. Ambassador Bale said that he has been working hard to resolve the matter and had raised the issue in his capital on a recent trip. He assured USUN/HC MINCOUNS that he expected a prompt resolution upon the GOC President's arrival in NY (Comment: President Sassou-Nguesso was in NY 9/21/09 through 9/25/09 but Mission did not contact USUN/HC or Connections Unlimited).

¶4. On October 6, 2009, USUN/HC facilitated a meeting between Ambassador Bale and Christine Waterbury, owner of Connections Unlimited. The Ambassador presented Ms. Waterbury with a check for \$82,299.78 and expressed his regrets for the length of time it took to resolve the debt. Ms. Waterbury accepted his apologies and thanked the mission for bringing the matter to a close. Ms. Waterbury informed USUN/HC, on October 13, that the funds are in her account.

RICE